

# **Dvar Torah** by **Rabbi Chanoch Yeres**

to his community at  
Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe  
*Graciously shared with PhiloTorah*

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Twice in this week's parsha, the mitzvah of Tefillin is linked to the Exodus from Egypt.

First the Torah says "It shall be for you a sign upon your arm and a remembrance between your eyes... that G-d took you out of Egypt. (13:9)

Then it says: It shall be for you a sign upon your arm and a frontlet between your eyes that with a strong hand did G-d take you out of Egypt. (13:16)

What could the putting on Tefillin possibly have to do with the Exodus from Egypt?

Rashi points out that writing these passages and binding them upon our heads and arms should serve as a daily reminder of G-d's role in our Exodus from Egypt. This message must be reinforced constantly as if it were written on our hands and hearts.

To really understand the connection between Tefillin and the Exodus, we must analyze the meaning and symbolism of these two concepts. The Exodus initiated the process that led to the eternal bond between G-d and the Jewish people.

These miraculous events during the Exodus were a sign to the world that G-d had chosen the Israelites and his special people. Therefore, remembering the Exodus is basically remembering the origins of our connection to G-d.

Similarly, the Tefillin also remind us of this special connection between G-d and His people. The Talmud in Eruvin (96a) points out that the Tefillin are the physical manifestation of the Israelites' bond with G-d. "Man always needs a sign of his bond to G-d... this sign is Tefillin."

R' Aryeh Kaplan in his book on Tefillin, explains that the winding around the middle finger symbolizes the bond of love between G-d and Israel like a wedding ring. Through the Tefillin, we can see and feel this bond.

To sum it up, this physical representation is a constant reminder to each one of us of this unique relationship with G-d. It encourages us to perform every mitzva, to strengthen that tremendous bond. It is for this reason we can appreciate both the Exodus and the Tefillin. They represent the love and enthusiasm we have as being the Chosen People. 